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Headline: Many Organizations Leaderless Because of Fighting

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FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE:

1. [Text] San Salvador, 12 Dec (ACAN - EFE)--Many political, union, university, religious, and civic organizations have been 'beheaded' by the offensive launched by the Salvadoran guerrillas a month ago, by the Army's response to the offensive, and by extremist groups' retaliatory actions.

- 2. These organizations—most of which actively favored a political solution to the Salvadoran war—have been left without main leaders because, according to party members and supporters, they have been killed, forced to hide or leave the country for "security reasons"
- 3. The Jesuit Central American University's (UCA) main leaders were murdered. According to religious organization sources, approximately 50 priests—Salvadoran and foreigners—have left the country because they felt ''persecuted'' by the Army which links them to the guerrillas.
- 4. The editorial of the 15 December edition of PROCESO—a UCA weekly publication—asserts that the murder of the six Jesuits on UCA premises on 16 November, occurred at the same time when several churches and union headquarters were being searched by ''people in uniforms.''
- 5. PROCESO maintains that 'apparently, they wanted to strike one single blow and behead every organization labeled by government propaganda as an FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] facade.''
- 6. However, Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani said before he left to attend a Central American presidential summit in Costa Rica, that his government does not persecute religious leaders.
- 7. Three days after the guerrillas started their largest offensive in the decade--on 14 November--Guillermo Ungo and Hector Oqueli, the main leftist opposition leaders, left El Salvador, saying that they had received death threats in messages broadcast over the government's radio network.

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- 8. Leaders of the General Confederation of Workers (CGT)—which is linked to the Christian Democratic Party—have reported that they are being persecuted and blame the Army and the guerrillas for 'violating human rights.''
- 9. CGT Leader Jose Luis Grande Preza asserted that ''to recuperate and maintain their privileges, the extreme rightists have unscrupulously turned the Army against its own people and generated repression and persecution against the church, the opposition, and union movements.''
- 10. Before leaving for Guatemala to obtain support for a cease-fire in El Salvador, Grande Preza said the guerrillas '' violate human rights in the name of revolution' and that 'each side justifies its violence, but the only truth is that the people always end up burying the dead.''
- 11. Ludovico Samayoa, deputy of the main opposition Christian Democratic Party [PDC], asserted that two PDC municipal officials in Ilobasco had been arrested by Army members in the past few days. Ilobasco is located 60 km northeast of San Salvador.
- 12. 'The government has initiated a generalized repression to dismantle the party and frighten our members with these arrests,'' said Samayoa.
- 13. Human Rights Commission Coordinator Miguel Montenegro said that his office, as well as other offices of organizations that oppose the government, 'were searched and destroyed by bombs' in the eastern city of San Miguel.
- 14. Ignacio Ellacuria, one of the six Jesuits murdered on 16 November, founder of PROCESO and UCA director, had noted a few months before his death that 'the Salvadoran political process had entered a new phase of moderation and flexibility with the increase of political spaces.''
- 15. In contrast the editorial that appears in the next edition of PROCESO stresses: 'It is the hour of the long knives. The maelstrom of blood that has come upon the country in the past month has shred to pieces the phase of moderation in which the main participants of the Salvadoran political process had been involved.''